

# **Getting Acquainted with Adobe FrameMaker 5.5**

***By Mei Kwok***

Good communication is the essence of a successful business. Desktop publishing is one way to create media to communicate with a customer or user. When thinking of desktop publishing, most people automatically think of Adobe PageMaker or QuarkXPress. However, Adobe also produces a less well-known publishing package, called FrameMaker 5.5, that combines the features of word processing, desktop publishing, and graphics. It is an ideal desktop publishing program for lengthy complex technical material or documents that need to be updated and distributed frequently. For example, it can be used to produce newsletters, brochures, booklets, reports, proposals, policies, and on-line documents. It can convert documents in several formats and publish in many languages. While Adobe FrameMaker 5.5 makes desktop publishing easier, it can also expand your on-line and global-publishing market.

## ***Special Features of FrameMaker***

FrameMaker 5.5 has some features that are different than other desktop publishing programs. For example, FrameMaker allows the user to modify the angle, weight, and trapping of text. FrameMaker is unique in that it can combine portrait and landscape pages in one document and can extract data from databases. Each FrameMaker document can contain up to eight million elements.

FrameMaker 5.5 provides a sophisticated “condense and expand” feature which allows the user to enlarge or shrink the width of the text and graphics between 10% and 1000% (the “Stretch Value”). If the Stretch Value is set to less than 100%, the selection will be condensed; if it is set to more than 100%, the selection will be expanded. Users can apply this feature to single characters, single lines of text, entire paragraphs, and grouped

graphic and text objects. In addition, users can change the stretch of a selection by dragging its handles, or input a calculated percentage. In addition, text can be scaled proportionally to match the size of a graphic, so additional steps to match the type size to the size of a graphic are eliminated.

FrameMaker has a full-featured table editor. Table text can be sorted alphabetically, numerically, or by using a combination of both alphabetical and numerical methods. Sorted text can be displayed in ascending or descending order. An especially useful feature allows the user to sort uppercase letters separate from lowercase letters. When a document is saved, the user can specify the order in which the table cells are to be saved as well as how the table cells and table rows/columns are to be separated. In addition, the user can save documents containing tables in the Text Only format, and specify a method for separating rows and columns in the Text Only file (usually tabs are used to separate columns, while returns are used to separate rows).

FrameMaker can automatically number headings, chapters, sections, steps, illustrations, figures, footnotes, equations, and tables. It can instantly generate indexes, tables of contents, and appendices.

FrameMaker can accommodate spot and process color for both print and on-line documents. Users can create custom colors or use one of 12 color libraries, including Focoltone, Toyo, Munsell Book of Color, Munsell High Chroma Colors, a variety of PANTONE libraries, TruMatch, and the Adobe Crayon and Grey Selector. All colors can be tinted.

### ***FrameMaker and the Web***

Today, businesses are placing more emphasis on on-line publishing. The World Wide Web is a major method for gathering, disseminating, and exchanging information. By using Adobe FrameMaker 5.5, users can distribute the same documents in print and on-line without buying any additional tools. To accommodate web publishing, FrameMaker

documents can be output in PostScript code, HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language), or Acrobat PDF (Portable Document Format).

FrameMaker 5.5 includes a built-in HTML feature that simplifies hypertext-authoring and export. After a document has been created, the user simply selects the “Save As HTML” option to create a document for Web. While a document is being saved in the HTML format, graphic images can automatically be converted to web-friendly graphic formats, such as GIF, JPEG or PNG. Once a document is saved in the HTML format, the file is ready to be posted on the Web. If desired, a user can save a document in multiple HTML files and embed hypertext and URL links in each HTML file.

FrameMaker comes bundled with Acrobat Acrobat 3.0. Acrobat enables users to create and read PDF files. Once the PDF conversion is complete, hypertext links and cross-references become Acrobat PDF hypertext links.

### ***FrameMaker and International Publishing***

FrameMaker 5.5 is available in several different language versions, including English, French, German, Swedish, Italian, Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, and Japanese. Multinational companies can use these versions to develop their overseas markets. FrameMaker includes 17 spell check/hyphenation dictionaries and thesauri, including English, U.K. English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Swiss German, Canadian French, Catalan, Brazilian, Portuguese, and Nynorsk.

FrameMaker is especially useful for publishing in Japanese if the user has a Japanese version of the computer operating system. It is compliant with Japanese publishing standards in a WYSIWYG environment. In particular, FrameMaker can build and sort indexes in Japanese and can automatically number pages and footnotes using Japanese characters. It also contains a Japanese grammar checker and allows typographic control of rubi characters (small characters that appear above other characters to indicate

phonetic representation). Notably, FrameMaker lets users combine Roman and Japanese typefaces in special custom fonts so that English and Japanese characters can both be used in the same paragraph. This feature makes it possible to create bilingual documents that would otherwise be difficult (at best) to produce.

### ***FrameMaker is Multiplatform Friendly***

Adobe FrameMaker 5.5 works in a multiplatform environment. It supports UNIX, Windows, and Macintosh operating systems. The cross-platform nature of FrameMaker 5.5 allows document files to run interchangeably on any supported platform. It allows users to import text from Microsoft Word and WordPerfect. Users can drag and drop objects, text, and graphics from the desktop directly into a FrameMaker document.

### ***Conclusion***

In conclusion, Adobe FrameMaker is becoming popular in business today. Many large corporations are using it in-house to produce highly structured and/or lengthy documents. It provides users with many powerful features and can produce graphically-appealing documents. Also, it provides easy accessibility to on-line and global-publishing. Adobe FrameMaker is a powerful publishing package that may be a useful addition to your software library.

### ***About the Author***

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